

Poet Laureate Committee Meeting

April 13 2015

Town Manager's Conference Room 8AM

Present: John Burt, Jeff Boudreau, Pam Powell, Liza Halley, Jane Howard & Adam Chapdelaine (at the beginning of the meeting)

Election of Chair: Liza Halley

Election of Clerk: John Burt

Agenda for Meeting:

- Overview/Introduction (Adam Chapdelaine)
- Role of the Committee
- Process for Choosing Poet Laureate
- Timeline
- Questions
- Action Items
- Set Next Meeting and Agenda

Notes:

ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE

The committee members are charged to help select and make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen a Poet Laureate for the Town of Arlington. We read over the Town Meeting notes where the establishment of the committee was voted on.

PROCESS ~ CHOOSING POET LAUREATE

Criteria

- Resident of Arlington during the duration of service: for one year, renewable yearly for up to a total of three years.
- Should have published poetry and have samples available. Can be self-published but having a book is a plus. Should be actively seeking publication.
- Must be available to fulfill the duties of the position as defined by Town Meeting 2014 article 13: The duties of the Poet Laureate shall be to present original works of poetry, conduct readings, and participate in public events and Town, public school and library programs as appropriate and practicable.
- The position is an honorary, volunteer position.
- We will also consider diversity, our sense of their presence during interviews (would this person be able to engage people of all ages?).
- We also discussed the quality of the poetry of the applicants as an important piece of the criteria, knowing the diversity in voices and our own subjective judgments of poetry.

THE TIMELINE AND PROCESS

- Aim to complete the process by July 4. Need to bring nominee to Board of Selectmen at the end of June. (This might not be possible)
- Publicize the call for the position by May 1. (We will need to work out some details about supervision before then.)
- Two week nomination period May 1-15: A letter of interest indicating what ideas they have for the position, a CV, and a portfolio of poems.
- Selection Period
- Nomination to Board of Selectmen
- Confirmation by Selectmen

PUBLICITY

- Jeff is a master a PR and he will help take the lead on this. We plan to use both print and electronic resources to help spread the word.

QUESTIONS FOR ADAM CHAPDELAINE

- Supervision: Does the Town Manager supervise the Poet Laureate?
- Who organizes the Poet Laureate's duties and appearances?
- Do we need to work with the Town's Human Resources department?

ACTION ITEMS

- Pamela offered to take a lead on this, but all of us plan to research how other towns have selected and managed Poet Laureates. Cambridge, Brookline, Boston, and Bedford all have poet laureates.
- Everyone who is not already will get sworn into the committee.

Next meeting will be April 21 at 8am in the 2nd floor conference room, Town Hall Annex.